

Tour of California leaves San Francisco

by UPI

PALO ALTO, Calif. - The 2008 Tour of California bike race kickoff was held on flat ground this year after being moved from to Palo Alto, Calif., from San Francisco. Organizers said it is common to move the start of a multi-day race -- in this case a 650-mile event -- so as to not disturb locals and to keep cyclists from getting in a rut, the San Francisco Chronicle reported Sunday. The area chosen for the start is the flattest area along the course, in contrast to the previous starting point, hilly San Francisco. "That doesn't mean the ride will be easy," said Jeff Selzer, manager of Palo Alto Bicycles, which is located smack in the middle of Sunday's route. "You think riding a bike at 40 mph is easy? You try it." The prologue 2-miles of the eight-day was taken by two-time world time trial champion Fabian Cancellara.

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